

**Opening Statement of Congressman John Lewis (D-GA)  
Subcommittee on Oversight Hearing on  
the Tax Return Filing Season, Internal Revenue Service  
Operations, Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Proposals, and the  
IRS National Taxpayer Advocate's Annual Report**

March 13, 2008

Today, the Subcommittee on Oversight is holding its annual hearing on IRS operations. We will examine the current tax return filing season, the IRS budget, and the Taxpayer Advocate's Annual Report.

We are very pleased to have the IRS Acting Commissioner and the National Taxpayer Advocate appear before the Subcommittee. I look forward to hearing their views about what needs to be done to serve the needs of taxpayers and to improve tax compliance.

I have reviewed the Administration's proposed budget, and I want to discuss whether it strikes the proper balance between taxpayer service and enforcement. We value the views of the witnesses and want to ensure the fairness of our tax system.

I would like to commend the IRS on the work done this filing season. I am sure that you have spent a great deal of time handling the tax filing season and educating taxpayers about the tax rebate checks. I am hopeful that the IRS will make sure that all taxpayers who are eligible for this benefit receive the services they need to complete and file returns.

Finally, I do not know how much longer you will be serving as Acting Commissioner of the IRS, Ms. Stiff. So, I would like to take this chance to thank you, on behalf of the Congress. It has been a pleasure to work with you, and you are always welcome back.

Thank you.

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